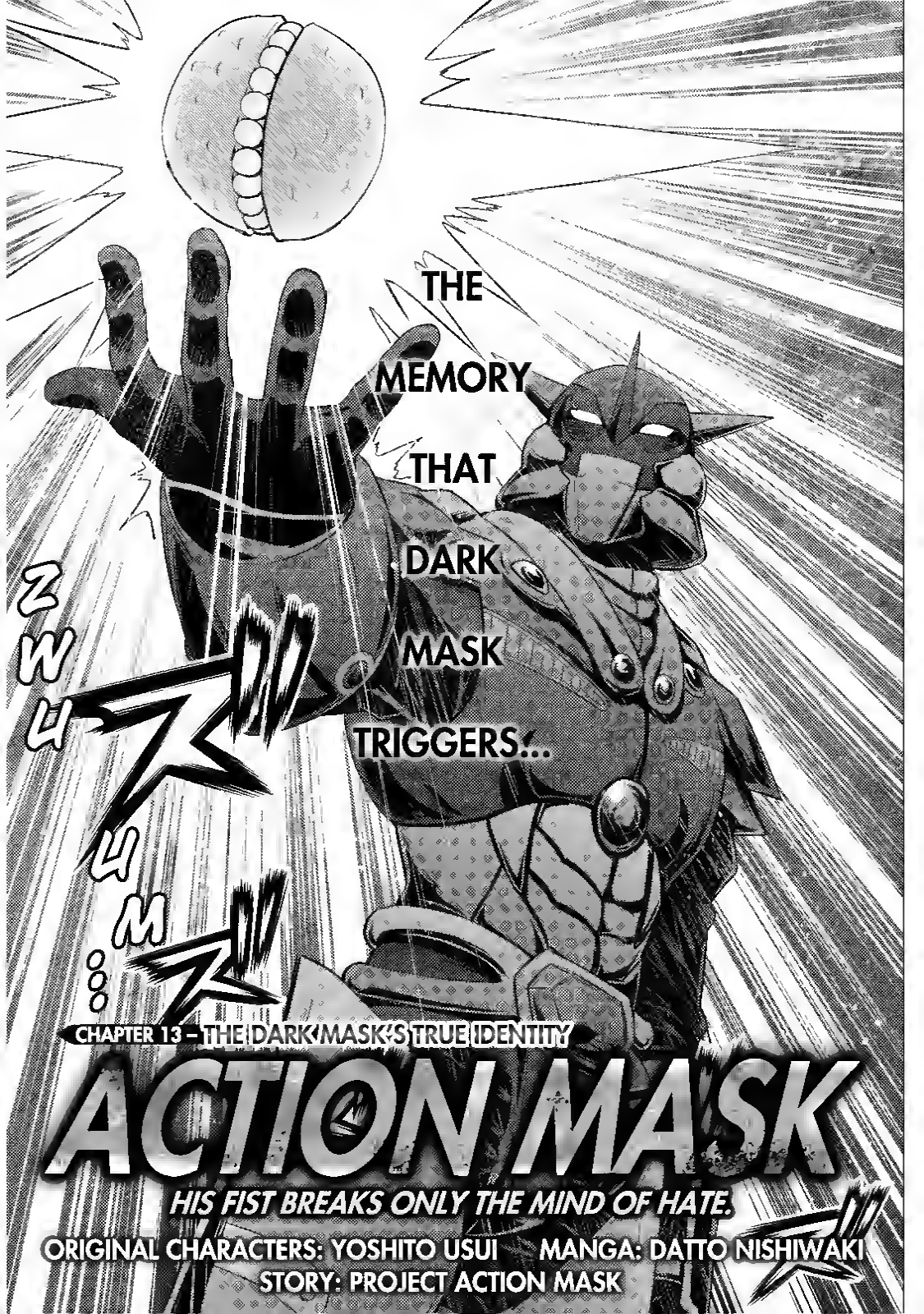
ACTION MASK
HIS FIST TREATS ONLY THE MIND OF HATE
DOOM
DOOM
DOOM
DOOM
DOOM
THOOM
THOOM
THOOM
...o

SHFF...

WHAT...?!

FLASH

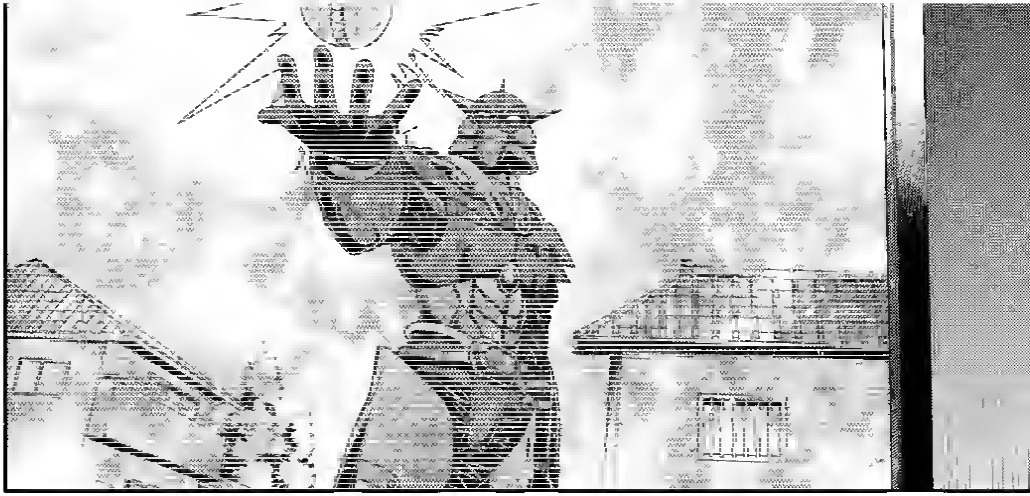


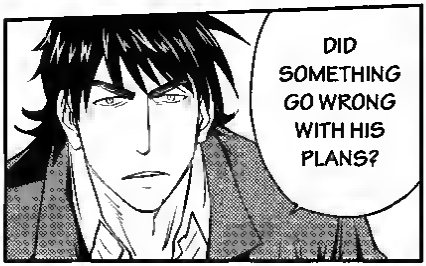
CHAPTER 13 – THE DARK MASK'S TRUE IDENTITY

ACTION MASK

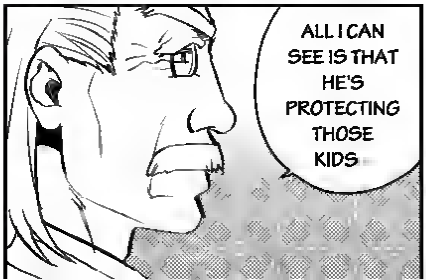
HIS FIST BREAKS ONLY THE MIND OF HATE.

ORIGINAL CHARACTERS: YOSHITO USUI MANGA: DATTO NISHIWAKI
STORY: PROJECT ACTION MASK



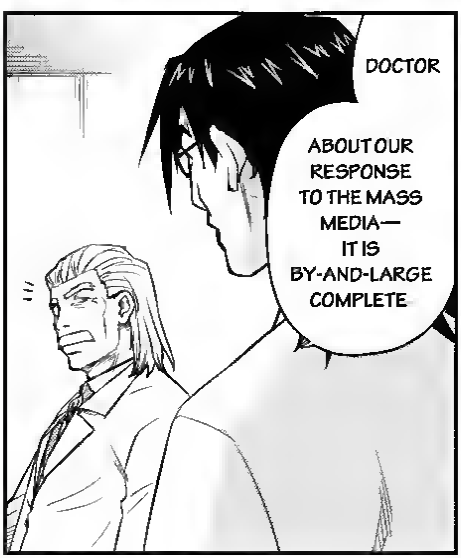

DID SOMETHING GO WRONG WITH HIS PLANS?

SO DARK MASK REALLY IS PULLING THE SEED OUT HIMSELF.
WHY? HE'S THE ONE WHO PLANTED IT IN THE FIRST PLACE.

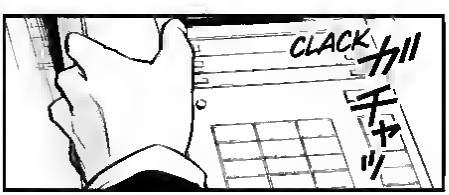

ALL I CAN SEE IS THAT HE'S PROTECTING THOSE KIDS

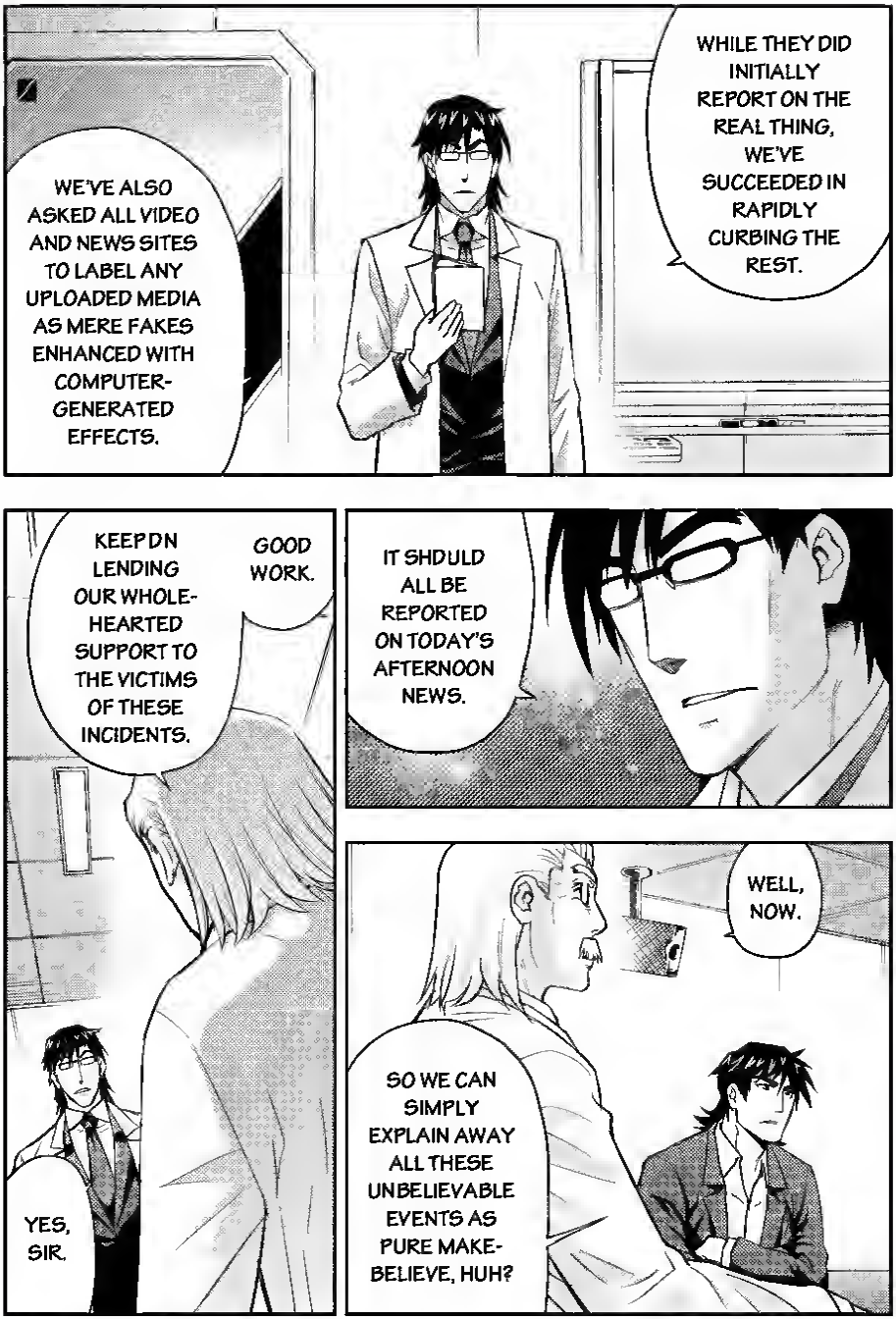
NO...
THAT CAN'T POSSIBLY BE THE CASE FOR HIM.

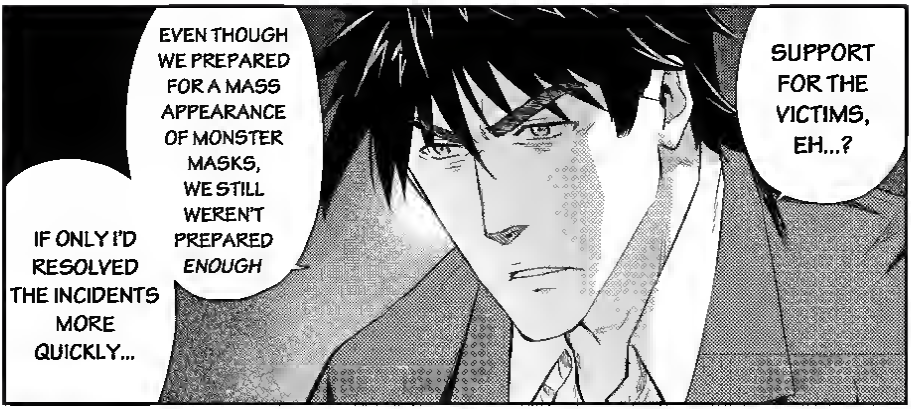
HE HAS NEVER HESITATED TO ATTACK CHILDREN UP UNTIL NOW.


DOCTOR
ABOUT OUR RESPONSE TO THE MASS MEDIA— IT IS BY-AND-LARGE COMPLETE

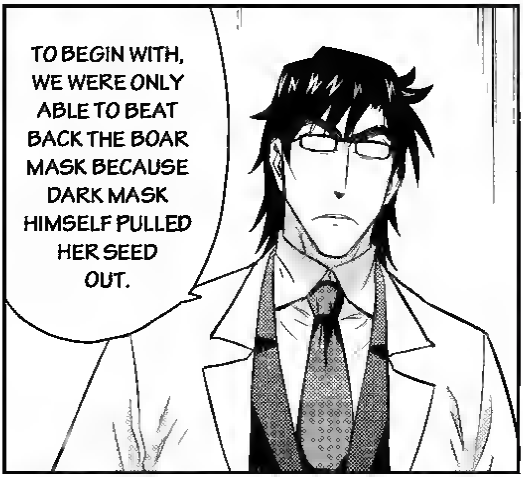
HRMMN...

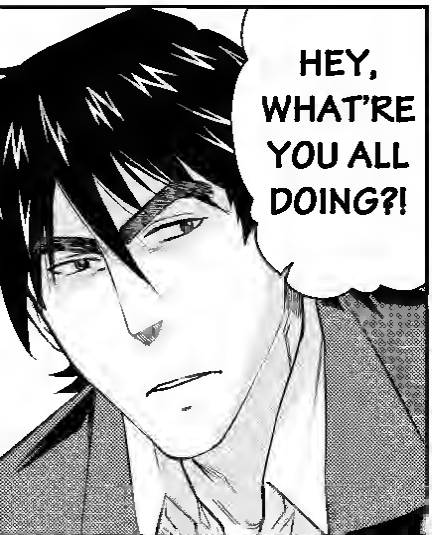

CLACK
カリ
チャリ

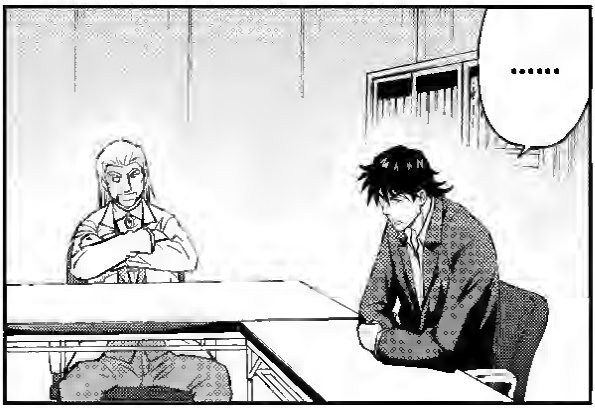

WE'VE ALSO ASKED ALL VIDEO AND NEWS SITES TO LABEL ANY UPLOADED MEDIA AS MERE FAKES ENHANCED WITH COMPUTER-GENERATED EFFECTS.
WHILE THEY DID INITIALLY REPORT ON THE REAL THING, WE'VE SUCCEEDED IN RAPIDLY CURBING THE REST.
GOOD WORK.
KEEP ON LENDING OUR WHOLE-HEARTED SUPPORT TO THE VICTIMS OF THESE INCIDENTS.
YES, SIR.
IT SHOULD ALL BE REPORTED ON TODAY'S AFTERNOON NEWS.
WELL, NOW.
SO WE CAN SIMPLY EXPLAIN AWAY ALL THESE UNBELIEVABLE EVENTS AS PURE MAKE-BELIEVE, HUH?


SUPPORT FOR THE VICTIMS, EH...?
EVEN THOUGH WE PREPARED FOR A MASS APPEARANCE OF MONSTER MASKS, WE STILL WEREN'T PREPARED *ENOUGH*
IF ONLY I'D RESOLVED THE INCIDENTS MORE QUICKLY...

IF THE SAME THING HAPPENS NEXT TIME, THEN...

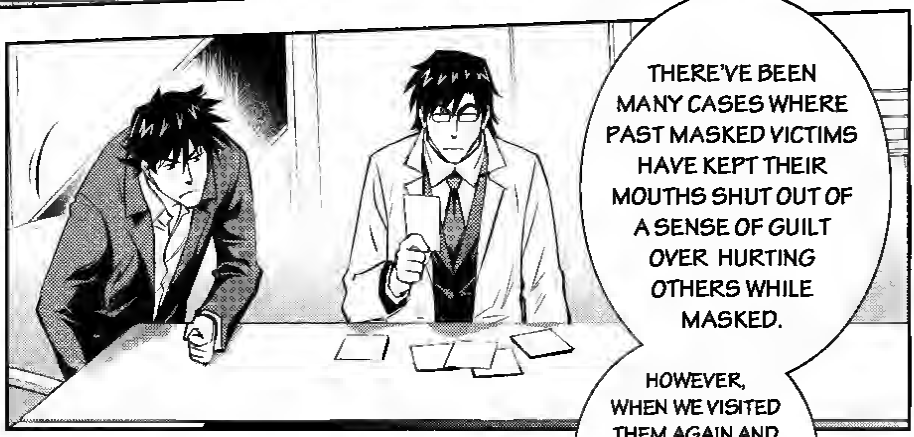

TO BEGIN WITH, WE WERE ONLY ABLE TO BEAT BACK THE BOAR MASK BECAUSE DARK MASK HIMSELF PULLED HER SEED OUT.


HEY, WHAT'RE YOU ALL DOING?!


.....

MIMI.
DOCTOR.
WE'VE FIGURED OUT THAT THERE'S A COMMON PERSON WHO HAS COME INTO CONTACT WITH EACH AND EVERY MASKED VICTIM SO FAR.
IS THAT SO?
WE WON'T GET ANYWHERE WITH YOU ALL MAKING FACES LIKE THAT!
ALL RIGHT, LET'S GO CATCH OURSELVES A DARK MASK!

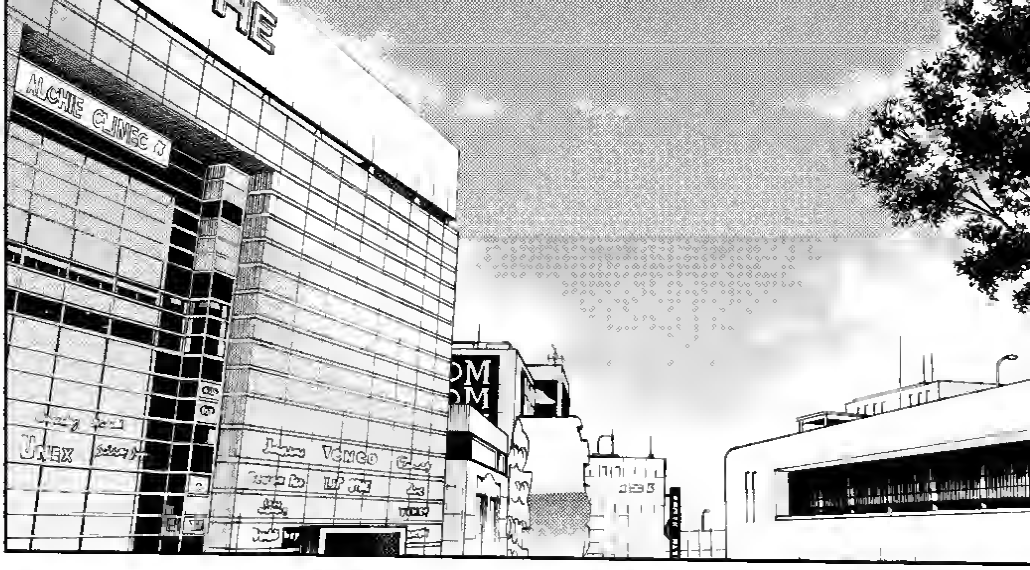
スリ〜ッ
SLUFF


THERE'VE BEEN MANY CASES WHERE PAST MASKED VICTIMS HAVE KEPT THEIR MOUTHS SHUT OUT OF A SENSE OF GUILT OVER HURTING OTHERS WHILE MASKED.
HOWEVER, WHEN WE VISITED THEM AGAIN AND EXPLAINED ABOUT THE DAMAGE IN THE MOST RECENT INCIDENT..
...THEY BEGAN TO TALK TO US A BIT, SAYING THAT THEY DON'T WANT TO LET THE SAME THING HAPPEN AGAIN.

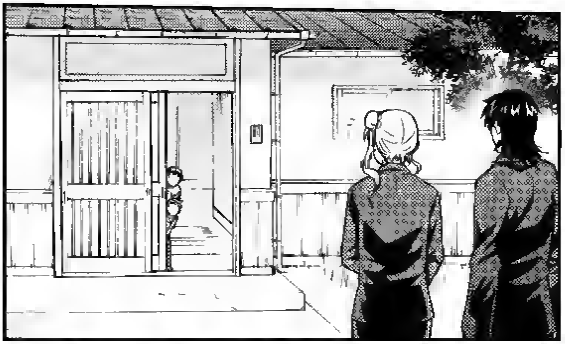
SO, THESE MEN ARE...?
WE COMPARED THE FEATURES DESCRIBED BY THE MASKED VICTIMS TO IMAGES FROM ANY SECURITY CAMERAS AROUND THE AREA.
YEP.

HE MAY NOT HAVE FELT LIKE HIDING FROM THE START.
PERHAPS HE FEELS CONFIDENT THAT HE WON'T GET CAUGHT...
DID HE SLIP, LETTING HIMSELF GET CAUGHT ON CAMERA?
NOD コク
HRRM...
HMMN.
IF WE CAN GRASP HIS TRUE GOALS, THEN WE CAN SAY THAT THE TRUE IDENTITY OF THE DARK MASK MAY BE AMONG THESE MEN.
I'M COUNTING ON YOU.
WE HAVEN'T NARROWED THE PERPETRATOR DOWN TO A SINGLE PERSON YET, SO WE'RE OUT TO ASK QUESTIONS AGAIN.

DO YOU REMEMBER THIS FACE AT ALL?
STILL, THOUGH, HE'S GOT A PRETTY AVERAGE FACE.
GASP
I THINK I'D REMEMBER A FACE LIKE THAT, THOUGH...
HMM, HE'S PRETTY HANDSOME, NO?
ISN'T THAT JUST YOUR PREFERENCES FOR—
WRONG, BUDDY!
GET READY!
YOU'RE COMING ALONG WITH ME!


ALCHE CAMERA
UNEX
VONGO

THANK YOU FOR THE OTHER DAY...!



OH, MY.

I'M SURE IT'S THIS MAN.
YES.
HE SAID THIS WHEN WE PASSED EACH OTHER...
"HATRED IS POWER."

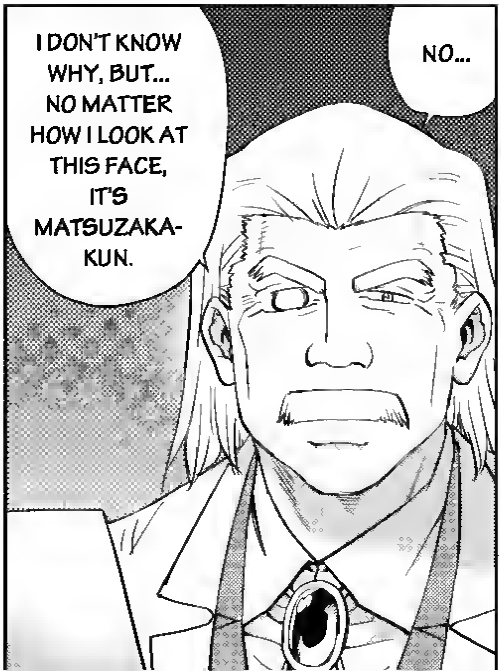
HOW'RE THINGS GOING?
MIMI-SAN.
ABOUT THAT... SEVERAL ORGANIZATIONS WE'VE SPOKEN WITH ARE PROGRESSING WITH THE COMPARISONS, BUT...
ROUGH SAILINGS RIGHT NOW, HUH.
SHIFF
DOCTOR!
WE SHOULD'VE MADE SOME PROGRESS BY NOW.
WE'VE IDENTIFIED HIS PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS, AS WELL AS AREAS WHERE HE'S BEEN SPOTTED AT CERTAIN KEY TIMES.

DOCTOR.
WE'VE NARROWED DARK MASK'S POTENTIAL HUMAN IDENTITY DOWN TO ONE MAN, BUT...
HRM...
YOU, THERE.
CAN YOU LOOK UP AN ASSISTANT PROFESSOR AT CASCAVIAN UNIVERSITY BY THE NAME OF "MATSUZAKA"?
YES, SIR.
WHAT...?
DO YOU KNOW HIM, DOCTOR...?
カタカタ...
KTAK KTAK
MM-HMM.
SOMETHING HAS BEEN BOTHERING ME SINCE SEEING THOSE PHOTOS, BUT...

ANYHOW, THAT MAN SHOULD BE...
HERE... HERE IT IS!
SHUDDER
...THIS IS DEFINITELY THE SAME GUY!
...HIS HAIR STYLE AND AURA ARE COMPLETELY DIFFERENT, BUT..

...FUKI-AGE-KUN?
SKRUT
カタッ
THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE!

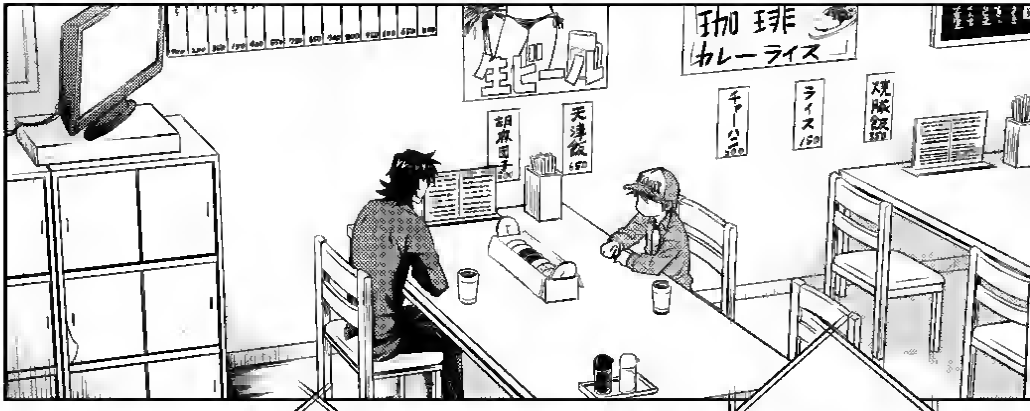
THIS MAN... ASSISTANT PROFESSOR MATSUZAKA'S ALREADY DEAD.
HE DIED IN A LARGE EXPLOSION AT THE AIRPORT SOME YEARS BACK


NO...
I DON'T KNOW WHY, BUT... NO MATTER HOW I LOOK AT THIS FACE, IT'S MATSUZAKA-KUN.

HE CAN'T POSSIBLY BE DARK MASK.
ISN'T THAT RIGHT, DOCTOR?

.....
THAT CAN'T BE!
BUT...!
CRINGE
IT LOOKS LIKE WE NEED TO INVESTIGATE THIS INCIDENT HE WAS IN MORE DEEPLY...!

SIGNS & BANNERS: RAMEN



THE INTERNET WAS CAUGHT IN AN UPROAR FOR A TIME
THERE ARE MANY WHO HAVE MISTAKEN THESE ALL-TOO-REALISTIC SPECIAL EFFECTS FOR ACTUAL
お騒がせ？大規模特撮の

*A RUCKUS? LARGE-SCALE SPECIAL EFFECTS—

SOMETHING'S NOT RIGHT HERE, MAN.
HMN?
ACTION MASK DID SUCH A GREAT JOB TAKING CARE OF THOSE INCIDENTS.
AND YET KIDS AT SCHOOL ARE ALREADY SAYING IT'S ALL A BUNCH OF FAKE STUFF.
HEROES ARE PROTECTING THE PEACE, BUT NOBODY KNOWS ABOUT IT.
.....
...MAYBE IT'S BETTER NOT TO HAVE HEROES AROUND.
AHH-MMF
HUH?

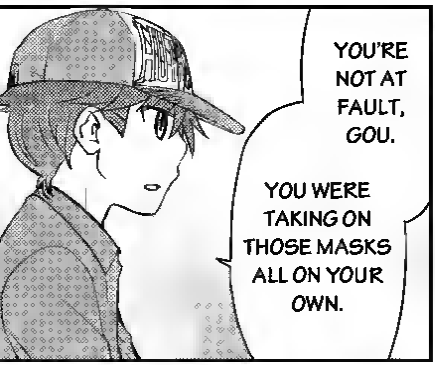
A TRUE WORLD AT PEACE IS A WORLD THAT NEEDS NO HEROES, RIGHT?
生ビール
天津飯 550

.....
HMMMN.

...YEAH.
BUT HE WENT STRAIGHT BACK TO WORK AFTER COMING HOME.

麺
ANYWAY
YOU GOT TO FINALLY SPEND SOME QUALITY TIME WITH YOUR DAD RECENTLY, RIGHT?
RECENTLY?

I DON'T BLAME HIM, REALLY.
DAD'S BEEN RAISING ME ALL BY HIMSELF SINCE MOM DIED.
I CAN'T ASK MUCH OUT OF HIM.


YOU'RE NOT AT FAULT, GOU.
YOU WERE TAKING ON THOSE MASKS ALL ON YOUR OWN.

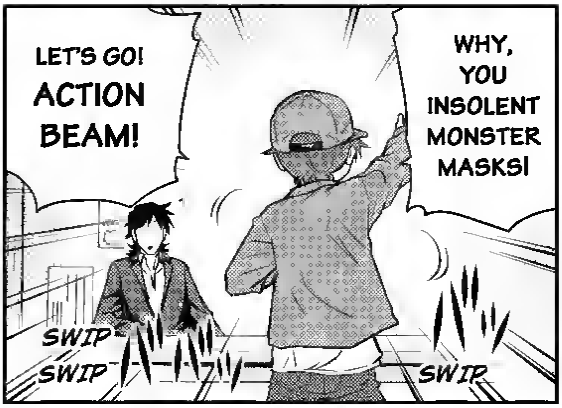
...SORRY.
IF ONLY I HAD TAKEN DOWN THOSE MONSTER MASKS MORE QUICKLY.

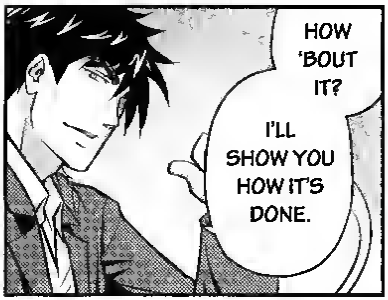
MAN!

.....

AHAHAHA
Kamen?
IF ONLY I COULD BECOME ACTION MASK, TOO!
THEN I COULD FIGHT NEXT TO YOU!

WAH HAH HAH HAH HAH!

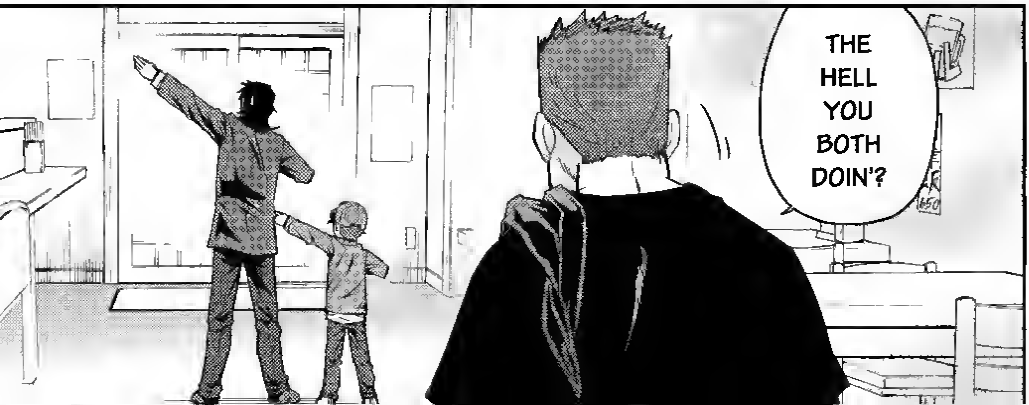

LET'S GO! ACTION BEAM!
WHY, YOU INSOLENT MONSTER MASKS!
SWIP
SWIP
SWIP


HOW 'BOUT IT?
I'LL SHOW YOU HOW IT'S DONE.

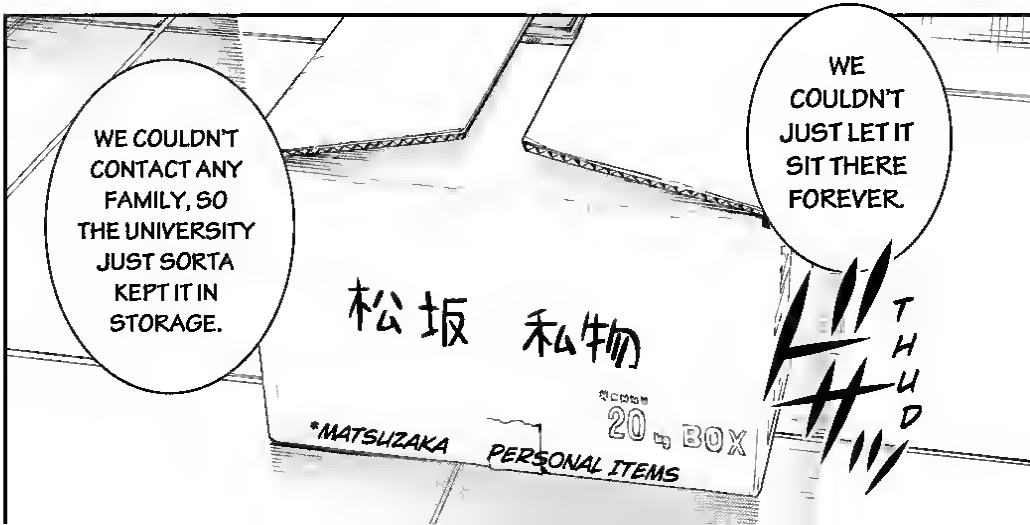
THE ANGLE OF YOUR ARMS ISN'T HIGH ENOUGH
SKRUT

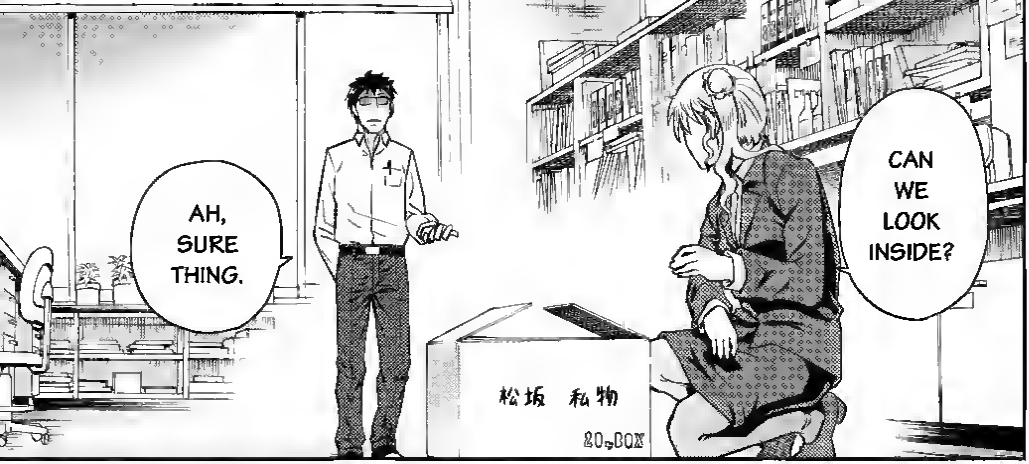
POSE

WAH
HAH
HAH
HAH
HAH!

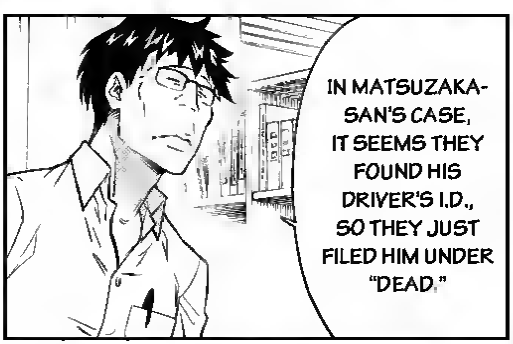

THE
HELL
YOU
BOTH
DOIN'?

MAN, IT'S BEEN SOME TIME, NOW.

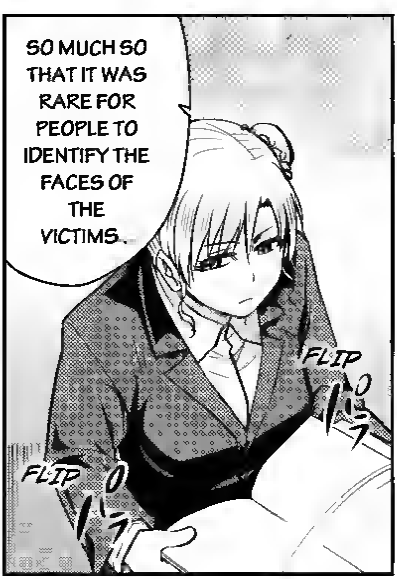

WE COULDN'T CONTACT ANY FAMILY, SO THE UNIVERSITY JUST SORTA KEPT IT IN STORAGE.
WE COULDN'T JUST LET IT SIT THERE FOREVER.
松坂 私物
20 BOX
*MATSUZAKA PERSONAL ITEMS
THUD


CAN WE LOOK INSIDE?
AH, SURE THING.
松坂 私物
20₉BOX

...UMM, REGARDING WHAT WE WERE TALKING ABOUT EARLIER.
HIS BODY WAS NEVER FOUND?
YEAH... IT REALLY WAS ONE HUGE EXPLOSION.


IN MATSUZAKA-SAN'S CASE, IT SEEMS THEY FOUND HIS DRIVER'S I.D., SO THEY JUST FILED HIM UNDER "DEAD."

.....


SO MUCH SO THAT IT WAS RARE FOR PEOPLE TO IDENTIFY THE FACES OF THE VICTIMS.
FLIP
FLIP

COINCIDENTALLY, HIS LITTLE SISTER, WHO HE WAS AT THE AIRPORT TO PICK UP, WAS CAUGHT IN THE EXPLOSION AND DIED AS WELL...
SHE WAS REALLY SWEET, TOO.
SHUFFLE
EXCUSE ME HERE.
AH.
HERE WE GO, THIS ONE.
WANNA SEE?
FLIP
!

MATSUZAKA-SAN *REALLY* DOTED ON HIS SISTER, Y'KNOW?
HE MADE ALL THIS FUSS, SAYING SHE'D GOTTEN A BOYFRIEND OR SOMETHING.
SHE'S A CUTE ONE, SEE?

THIS WOMAN...!
A CONNECTION BETWEEN GOU AND THE DARK MASK...?!